



Microsoft Terminal Services and Visual PRO/5

By Nick Decker and Dan Christman

Have you ever wanted to get true thin client capabilities using Visual PRO/5®? Have you considered the ideal solution to giving your employees or customers quick and easy access to centrally located programs and data? How about making all of this available now to almost anyone, anywhere in the world without having to go around installing special software on the client's machine? With Microsoft Terminal Services, it is now possible to do all of this and more.

What Is Terminal Services?

In short, Terminal Services allows remote clients to have access to a complete Windows desktop. Because they aren't limited to other Windows machines, these remote clients can also be hand-held pocket PCs, UNIX workstations, or Apple Macintoshes. The clients can run a stand-alone program either in a window on their existing desktop or can replace their current desktop with the remote session. There's also a web browser-based client that provides similar functionality but doesn't require any additional software. To address security concerns, you can connect to a Terminal Services server over a Virtual Private Network (VPN), and it's possible to limit clients to running a specific program or set of programs without giving them access to the entire Windows desktop or other aspects of the operating system.

What Are The Differences In Visual PRO/5 Configuration?

Assuming that you've taken the plunge and have a Windows Terminal Server up and running, what do you do differently when installing and configuring BASIS products? The primary difference between a Windows Terminal Server (WTS) installation and the traditional "fat client" installation is that the WTS requires much less effort! For starters Visual PRO/5 will be installed only once (on the WTS Server) instead of on every client workstation. Since the concept of mapped drives and remote data doesn't apply, the DSKSYNs in the config.bbx file have to be configured one time, and then they will be correct for every client. Additionally, since the most common use case will be to have the interpreter, programs and data on the same machine you won't need to install an NT Data Server (unless you have remote clients using the BASIS ODBC Driver). Printers are easy too - WTS automatically gives clients the access to their own local printers and to network printers defined on the WTS server. This scenario provides a single-point of administration that makes maintenance a breeze.

Now that you know something about Microsoft Terminal Services, you can see that it offers an effective way to deploy your applications. You can also see how easy it is to integrate Visual PRO/5 and your applications with Microsoft Terminal Services. See [Microsoft's web site](#) to explore the possibilities further, or if you're simply interested in learning more about Microsoft Terminal Services.